(c) Requests from various cotton growing states including Maharashtra and Gujarat are being received by Government from time to time for release of export quota during the current cotton season. Government of India have already released a quantity of 2.95 lakh bales of long and extra-long staple cotton for export during the current cotton season.

Fixation of minimum price of raw jute

796. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will the Minister of SUPPLY AND TETILXES be pleased to state:

(a) what is the basis for fixing the minimum price of raw jute at Rs. 215/-per quintal; and

(b) what were the reasons for not imposing any ceiling on raw jute price last year when the price of raw jute shoot up and even crossed Rs. 1000/-per quintal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SUPPLY AND TEXTILES (SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR SINGH): (a) The minimum statutory price of W.5 variety of raw jute in Assam at Rs. 215/-has been fixed on the basis of the recommendations of Agricultural Prices Commission.

(b) The maximum price was fixed after a unanimous recommendation to this effect for curbing speculation in jute without affecting growers was made in a meeting in May, 1985 with State Government, Union representatives and mill managements to explore avenues for getting the mills to function normally

Take-over of locked out jute mills in West Bengal

797. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:
SHRI INDRADEEP SINHA:

Will the Minister of SUPPLY AND TEXTILES be pleased to state whether Government have any proposal to take over those jute mills in West Bengal whose management refuse to lift the lock-out, despite requests by the Central and State Governments?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SUPPLY AND TEXTILES (SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR SINGH): No, Sir.

Raids at the establishments of leading industrialists

798. SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the establishments of two leading industrialists, Mr. Manu Chhabria and Mr. Vijay Mallyo were raided by the Enforcement Directorate recently; and

(b) if so, what are the details of the documents, cash, etc. seized and what further action is being taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As a result of the searches, conducted on 8-7-1985, incriminating documents and Indian currency of more than Rs. 2 lakhs have been seized. Further investigations are in progress. Appropriate action under the law, as warranted by the result of investigations, will be taken.

Purchase of raw jute by the Jute Corporation of India

799. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:

SHRI SURAJ PRASAD:

Will the Minister of SUPPLY AND TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Jute Corporation of India has not

started the purchase of raw jute till the 10th July, 1985 even after the jute season has set in;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the statutory minimum price of raw jute has not been announced till the 10th July, 1985 even after raw jute has started arriving in the market and

(c) if so, what are the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SUPPLY AND TEXTILES (SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR SINGH): (a) to (c) The Jute Corporation of India is primarily responsible for procuring raw jute from the growers when the ruling price touches the statutory minimum level. It also undertakes commercial procurement operations, backed by agreements with jute mills, mainly in the public sector undertakings. There was no occasion to start any such operation till 10 July, 1985.

The minimum support price for W.5 grade of raw jute in Assam for 1985-86 was announced in the middle of June. The notification regarding the prices of different varieties of jute and mesta, calculated in the light of the relative market differentials in various up country markets and also in Calcutta was made on 9 July, 1985.

Reconstitution of the Board of Steel Authority of India Limited

800. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to reconstitute the Board of Steel Authority of India Limited;

(b) whether Government also propose to include experts from Tata Iron Steel Company Limited and other private sector companies in the Board; and

(c) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF STEEL (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) to (c) It is proposed to reconstitute the Board of Directors of Steel Authority of India Limited so as to include persons of standing in the field of industrial Management. The composition of the restructured Board will be decided in due course.

Ash content in coking coal

801. SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA: Will the Minister of STEEL, MINES AND COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that average ash content of Indian coking coal delivered to the steel plants has risen from around 19 per cent to 24 per cent in the last six years:

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard and to what extent it has affected the production in the steel plants; and

(c) what remedial measures are being taken by Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL, MINES AND COAL (SHRI VASANT SATHE): (a) to (c) The ash content of coking coal supplied to steel plants has shown increase in respect of some washeries and decrease in respect of some others